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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3554
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0314
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO 4281
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 3883
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RUEABND/DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMIN SAN JUAN PR
RUEABND/DEA MIAMI FL

UNCLAS GEORGETOWN 000489

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WHA/CAR
INL/LP
CARACAS FOR DAO AND LEGATT
PORT OF SPAIN FOR DEA AND LEGATT
SAN JUAN FOR HARRIS AND BERGMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [GY](#)
SUBJECT: REQUEST AND RATIONALE FOR DEA OFFICE IN GUYANA

REF: (A)GEORGETOWN 424, (B)GEORGETOWN 112, (C)GEORGETOWN 22

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. In light of the great and increasing influence of the narcotics trade and related transnational crimes in Guyana, Post requests the formal establishment of a DEA office at Embassy Georgetown. Guyana is well on its way to narco-statehood -- a prospect that poses a real threat to U.S. interests. A permanent DEA presence would significantly improve USG's ability to fight drug trafficking in Guyana. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) The level of narco-trafficking influence on the political, judicial and economic systems in Guyana creates ripe conditions for the emergence of a narco-state. Because Guyana is a country of only 750,000 people with an official GDP of less than USD 1 billion, it does not garner much USG attention relative to more powerful and/or troublesome nations in the region. Narco-criminals, on the other hand, do not underestimate Guyana's attributes. They see a country with porous borders, corrupt and ineffective law enforcement, little or no control over its airspace, vast swaths of uncontrolled land, ready access to the Caribbean, North America, and Europe, and a government that has been lukewarm about clamping down on the drug trade. In other words, these narco-criminals see Guyana as a country where they can operate with impunity.

¶3. (SBU) Guyana shares borders with Venezuela, Suriname and Brazil -- three neighbors that provide a steady illicit flow of contraband across its borders. An especially disturbing development is Guyana's involvement in "drugs for arms" financing for insurgent groups like the FARC throughout the region. In addition, large-scale Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) infiltration into Venezuela has led to their playing a significant role in narcotics smuggling activities on the Guyana/Venezuela border.

¶4. (SBU) "Disrupting Criminal Organizations" is the primary objective in Post's FY2008 Mission Performance Plan (MPP). However, accomplishing this goal is made

difficult by the lack of a permanent DEA presence at Post. The DEA mission in Trinidad also covers Guyana, but is fully pre-occupied with the counter-narcotics initiatives in their host nation. DEA has done an excellent job serving both nations, but Guyana demands greater focus and its own DEA staff to fully address the severe narco-trafficking situation on the ground. A permanently manned office at Embassy Georgetown would ensure that DEA can work more effectively to accomplish the critical MPP counter-narcotics objectives and provide more sustained support to local law enforcement agencies in Guyana.

¶5. (SBU) Plans are already in train for DEA to assist in the establishment of a vetted counter-narcotics unit in Guyana. An important challenge facing this unit is the pervasive corruption in the country, which has undermined previous Guyanese counter-narcotics initiatives. Establishing a DEA office will allow close and constant monitoring of the vetted unit to help alleviate this problem.

¶6. (SBU) In economic terms for USG, a DEA office in Guyana would be more cost-effective over the long term. Without this office, the high level of activity generated by drug trafficking organizations in Guyana would result in ongoing, costly TDY expenditures relative to ICASS costs.

¶7. (U) Ambassador plans to meet with Michael Braun, DEA Chief of Operations, in June to discuss the formal establishment of a DEA office at Post via the NSDD-38 process.

¶8. (U) This message was cleared by DEA Port of Spain.

BULLEN